

Public Hearing on Redistricting Fort Walton Beach (June 21, 2011)

Contents

Hearing Report.....	2
Submission from Ed Winkelseth	3
Handouts	6
Displays Prepared by Florida Senate	8

Hearing Report

Date: June 21, 2011

City: Ft. Walton Beach

Location: Ft. Walton Beach High School

Time: 6:00pm-9:00pm

Number of Speakers: 36

Total Attendance: 141

The Ft. Walton Beach public hearing was held in the library/media center at Ft. Walton Beach High School (400 Hollywood Boulevard, Ft. Walton Beach, 32548). A map with directions to the hearing and parking instructions was posted on the internet prior to the meetings. Legislative staff posted signs throughout the school to point the public towards the library. Staff provided assistance at the hearing by answering questions and displaying district building software outside the meeting room. The meeting was advertised in the Northwest Florida Daily News June 18-21, and an op-ed jointly authored by the Chairman Gaetz and Chairman Weatherford was published in the Northwest Florida Daily News on June 19. Notice of the meeting was published on each chamber's website, and the public was invited to the meetings via social media websites. The hearing was streamed live on The Florida Channel's website, recorded, and subsequently re-aired. Thirty-six people signed up to speak at the hearing, which was attended by 141 people. Seven senators and twenty-four representatives were present at this hearing. After hearing testimony and gathering input from the public, legislators at the meeting were given an opportunity to comment.

Submission from Ed Winkelseth

Florida House (Ideal District Population 156,678)

<u>District</u>	<u>Counties</u>	<u>Constituents (approx)</u>	<u>Delta</u>
1	Escambia	148,810	-7,868
2.	Escambia	148,809	-7,868 -7,869
3	Santa Rosa	151,372	-5,306
4.	Okaloosa	180,822	+24,144
5	Walton	55,043	
	Holmes	19,927	
	Washington	24,896	
	Jackson	49,746	
		149,612	-7,066
6	Bay	168,852	+12,174
7	Start with Calhoun & Gulf County and keep working East.		

To me it makes sense to have a Representative representing one County if Possible. Yes, the District 5 Representative has Five (5) small counties (He's doing that now but in the future he will have less distance to travel).

And yes, even Ray Charles can see that four District Representatives are representing less than the ideal amount while Two (2) are representing more but no one said it would be easy.

Florida Senate
(Ideal District Population 470,033)

<u>District</u>	<u>Counties</u>	<u>Constituents (approx)</u>	<u>Delta</u>
2	Escambia	297,619	-21,042
	Santa Rosa	<u>151,372</u>	
		448,991	
4.	Okaloosa	180,822	-5,868
	Walton	55,043	
	Holmes	19,927	
	Washington	24,896	
	Calhoun	14,625	
	Bay	<u>168,852</u>	
		464,165	

6 Start at Jackson, Liberty & Gulf Counties and keep pressing East.

It looks as though the present district were drawn up by the farmers and Ranchers in the North half and the developers in the Southern half of the counties. It's time for our Senator's to work for the entire counties they represent.

First Congressional District

(Ideal District Population 696,345)

<u>Counties</u>	<u>Constituents (approx)</u>	<u>Delta</u>
Escambia	297,619	
Santa Rosa	151,372	
Okaloosa	180,822	
Walton	55,043	
Holmes	<u>19,927</u>	
	704,783	+8,438

REDISTRICTING · 2012

ABOUT REDISTRICTING

After each decennial Census, the Legislature redraws the districts from which voters elect their public officials. In general, districts are redrawn to accommodate population changes and ensure that district populations are as nearly equal in number as practicable.

There will be opportunities for citizen participation during public hearings, interim committee meetings, and the 2012 Session.

REDISTRICTING LAW

The United States Constitution, the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Florida Constitution each regulate redistricting. Under the United States Constitution, district populations must be as nearly equal as practicable. In addition, race may not be the predominant factor in drawing lines, unless the use of race is narrowly tailored to achieve a compelling interest.

The Voting Rights Act requires the creation of a district that performs for racial minorities where (1) a minority population is geographically compact and sufficiently numerous to be a majority in a single district; (2) the minority population is politically cohesive; (3) the majority votes sufficiently as a bloc to enable it usually to defeat the minority-preferred candidate; and (4) under all of the circumstances, the minority population has less opportunity than others to participate in the political process and elect representatives of its choice.


The Voting Rights Act applies additional requirements to districts that include any part of Collier, Hardee, Hendry, Hillsborough, or Monroe County. In these districts, the Voting Rights Act prohibits purposeful discrimination and protects against retrogression—or backsliding—in the ability of racial minorities to elect representatives of their choice. To ensure compliance with these requirements, the redistricting plan must be submitted to and precleared by a federal court or the United States Department of Justice before it may be enforced.

The Florida Constitution requires that districts be contiguous. A district is contiguous if all of its territory is in actual contact, uninterrupted by the territory of another district. Contact at a corner or right angle is insufficient, but territory may cross bodies of water. The Constitution allows state legislative districts to overlap, either partially or entirely.

In November 2010, the voters added Amendments 5 and 6 to the Florida Constitution. These Amendments prohibit line-drawing that intentionally favors or disfavors a political party or an incumbent. The Amendments also afford protection to racial and language minorities. Districts may not be drawn (1) with the intent or result of denying or abridging the equal opportunity of racial or language minorities to participate in the political process; or (2) to diminish their ability to elect representatives of their choice. Finally, unless it would conflict with federal law or the standards described above, the Amendments require that district populations be as nearly equal as practicable, and that districts be compact and, where feasible, follow existing political and geographical boundaries.

THE NUMBERS

In 2012, the Legislature will redraw the state's congressional districts as well as districts for Florida House and Florida Senate seats. The number of congressional districts in Florida will increase from 25 to 27. The number of Florida House seats must be between 80 and 120, while the number of Florida Senate seats must be between 30 and 40. Currently, the Florida House and Florida Senate contain 120 members and 40 members, respectively. If these numbers are maintained, the average population of a Florida House district will be 156,678, while the average population of a Florida Senate district will be 470,033. Each congressional district will contain approximately 696,345 people.



PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Legislature will draw lines in accordance with the standards in federal and state law and traditional redistricting principles not inconsistent with those standards. To this end, the Legislature encourages public testimony directed to the following points:

- The full implementation of the protections afforded by the Amendments to racial and language minorities, including continuance of the Legislature's long-established policy to preserve or enhance the number of performing minority districts.
- The various measures of compactness, from geometric calculations to a broad consideration of how communities relate to one another, for example through commerce, transportation, and communication—in order to promote the creation of effective representational units.

REDISTRICTING 2012

- The feasibility of using political and geographical boundaries in the formation of districts, in light of other standards such as the equality of district populations, the protection of racial and language minorities, and compactness.
- To the extent not inconsistent with the Amendments, the desire to preserve the cores of existing districts or the proper placement of communities of interest in districts, as determined by local circumstances and voter preferences.


This approach, together with public testimony, research, and facts developed throughout the redistricting process, will result in the adoption of redistricting plans that have the intent and result of full compliance with all legal mandates, including Amendments 5 and 6, and of effective and meaningful representation for all voters in the State of Florida.

Citizens from all parts of the state can visit the House website (www.floridaredistricting.org) and the Senate website (www.flsenate.gov/Redistricting), to learn about creating and submitting their own House, Senate, and congressional maps, and to participate actively in the most open, transparent, and interactive redistricting ever.

REDISTRICTING MILESTONES


- JUNE 20 - SEPTEMBER 1, 2011: STATEWIDE PUBLIC HEARINGS
- SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2011: INTERIM COMMITTEE MEETINGS
- JANUARY 10 - MARCH 9, 2012: REGULAR SESSION
- FEBRUARY - JUNE 2012: LEGAL REVIEWS
- JUNE 4 - 8, 2012: QUALIFYING FOR STATE AND FEDERAL OFFICES
- AUGUST 14, 2012: PRIMARY ELECTION
- NOVEMBER 6, 2012: GENERAL ELECTION

SENATE COMMITTEE ON REAPPORTIONMENT

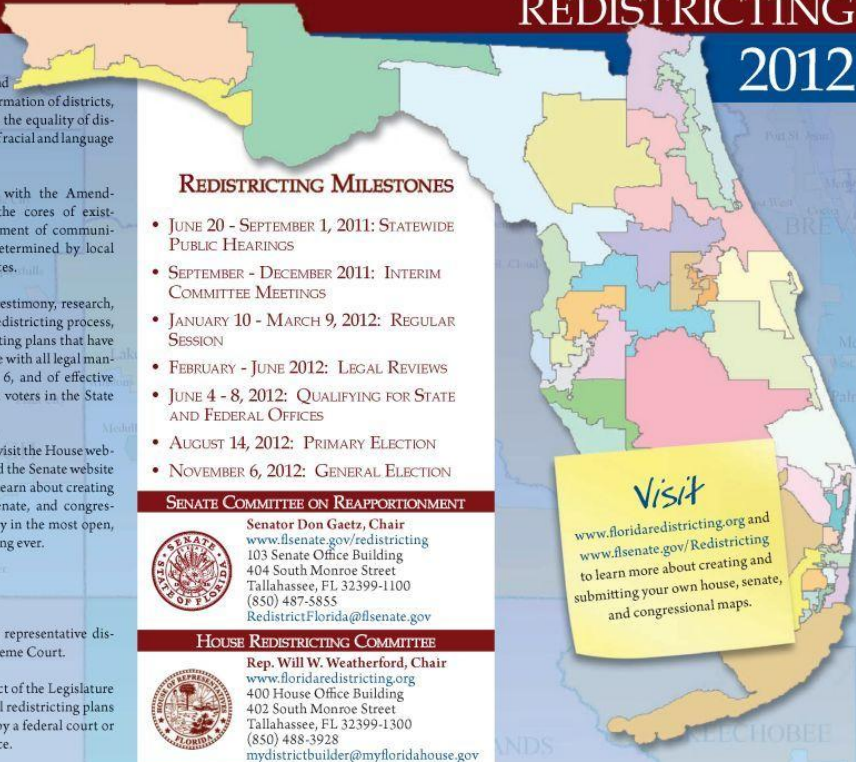


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 404 South Monroe Street
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RedistrictFlorida@flsenate.gov

HOUSE REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE



Rep. Will W. Weatherford, Chair
www.floridaredistricting.org
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 402 South Monroe Street
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300
 (850) 488-3928
mydistrictbuilder@myfloridahouse.gov



Visit

www.floridaredistricting.org and
www.flsenate.gov/Redistricting
 to learn more about creating and
 submitting your own house, senate,
 and congressional maps.

Draw and Submit Your Own Districts

District Builder is a full-featured web application with 2010 Census data for drawing Florida Senate, Florida House, and Congressional districts and submitting them to the Legislature. Submitting your plan is one of the best ways to show what works for your community. Citizens have full and easy access to the same web application and information that Senators and professional staff use.

To start using District Builder you need:

- A personal account. Choose “**District Builder**” at www.flsenate.gov/Redistricting to register.
- Display resolution of 1024 x 768 or higher.
- A broadband Internet computer and mouse. Firefox (3.6 and 4.0) and Internet Explorer (7 and 8) are supported (Internet Explorer 9 and Opera are not). Your browser must be set to allow JavaScript and pop-ups from “flsenate.gov.”

For full details, see <https://db10.flsenate.gov/db1/help>.

When you decide to submit your plan for public consideration, it will be published at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Redistricting/Plans> with a standard set of interactive map links, reports, downloads, and maps. Otherwise, your personal plans are stored on secure servers and exempt from inspection and copying. See § 11.0431(2)(e), Fla. Stat.

The Florida House of Representatives is building its own web application. To learn about “MyDistrictBuilder,” see www.floridaredistricting.org. The fact that the Senate and House systems are different is a plus. Each has unique features, and citizens can choose which better meets their needs.

Full-featured redistricting systems typically cost thousands of dollars per user. The overarching goal shared by the Florida Senate and Florida House is giving everyone free and easy access to all the same tools and data the Legislature is using.

With innovative technologies and joint [public hearings](#), the Florida Legislature is promoting the most open, accessible, and interactive redistricting ever.

Displays Prepared by Florida Senate

